



SEAT PLEASANT NEWS

OCTOBER 2011 EDITION Visit us on the web at: www.seatpleasantmd.gov

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City of Seat Pleasant

Mayor

Eugene W. Grant

Council President

Latasha Gatling
(At-Large Councilmember)

Ward I Councilmember

Elenora Simms

Ward II Councilmember

Aretha Stephenson

Ward III Councilmember

Reveral Yeargin

Ward IV Councilmember

Gerald Raynor

Ward V Councilmember

Darrell Hardy

At-Large Council member

Kelly Porter

City Administrator

Vincent E. Jones

Treasurer

Robert L. Ashton

Chief of Police

Samuel Prue

Director of Public Works

Johnny Thompson

City Clerk

Dashaun Lanham



MAYOR'S MESSAGE

Each September the City Council elects someone from among their ranks to serve as president of the council. This year they elected veteran member the honorable **Kelley Porter**, a resident of Ward IV to serve as their president. Councilman Porter has served admirably the residents and citizens of Seat Pleasant for over 16 years. In the past, Councilman Porter has held this post leading the legislative body of the city. I am confident that under

his leadership he will take the legislative branch of government to higher heights. Please give Councilman Porter your prayers.

I would like to thank outgoing president, the honorable **LaTasha Gatling** who has served faithfully for a little over two consecutive years as council president coming in after the resignation of former Councilman **Brian Shivers** of Ward II. Councilwoman Gatling, a relatively new member of the council, helped to move the agenda of the council forward moving our city closer toward becoming A City of Excellence. Councilwoman Gatling, a resident of Ward IV will continue to serve as an At-Large member of the city council.

We thank each member of the city council who serves in their respective roles. It is not easy to manage your personal responsibilities, work a full time job and serve your community as an elected official. Each elected official has to give up so much in order to serve you, the great people of our community. There are so many who make easy criticisms of our elected officials but don't really have an appreciation of what they must endure given the limited time they have and limited resources they have to work with.

It is not easy to hold these positions. In essence, the elected officials primarily volunteer their time to serve you. It is a misnomer to believe that your council receives a high salary. Each councilmember receives \$371.77 per month for their services. Each councilmember gives on average 10 hours each month (*for some councilmembers more*) which equates to \$37.18 per hour. Councilmembers attend monthly meetings; serve on committees both within the city and outside of the city. There are a number of documents they must read and comprehend in order to make decisions for the welfare of the city. The duties are very arduous and demanding. We owe a debt of thanks to each of our neighbors who make the sacrifice and take time away from their families to serve our community as a member of the city council.

The next time you see one of your councilmembers please take a moment to thank them for their service and pray for them. We will not always agree with the council and the decisions they make but we can be mature enough to not be disagreeable. We can demonstrate that the residents and citizens of A City of Excellence are intelligent and civil. We can work together to ensure that all of our actions will move us toward becoming A City of Excellence!

OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK



The City Council has passed the following legislations in the month of September

ORDINANCE O-12-04

Ordinance concerning Absentee Voting for the purpose of revising certain regulations to the casting of absentee ballots in municipal elections in the City of Seat Pleasant.

ORDINANCE O-12-06

Ordinance concerning Amendment of the Fiscal Year 2011-2011 Budget for the purpose of the Seat Pleasant Police Department Mobile Data Terminals.

Copies of this legislation are available from the Office of the City Clerk at: City Hall, 6301 Addison Road Seat Pleasant, Maryland 20743-2125

City Council Meetings

In accordance to the Seat Pleasant City Code Chapter 26 § 26-3B. A resident or nonresident desiring to address the Council shall submit the request to the City Clerk **24 hours in advance of the meeting**. The Clerk shall place the names of those addressing the Council on the agenda. If time permits, persons whose names do not appear on the agenda will be permitted to speak at the discretion of the Council President.

The City Council meetings are held on the second Monday of each month. Please be sure to contact the City Clerk directly at 301-336-2600 no later than the Friday preceding the meeting.

A WORD FROM COUNCILWOMAN SIMMS

A CONTEST FOR RESIDENTS

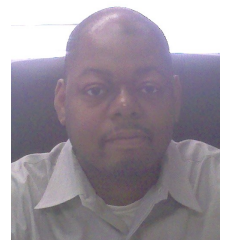


I am sponsoring a contest for Seat Pleasant residents. I am asking residents to submit their thoughts on "If I Were a Councilmember....." A grand prize winner will be announced at the November Public Session, November 14. However, all recipients will receive a token of appreciation. Submissions must be more than 50 words and include what you would do if you were a City Council member. Entries must be received by October 28th by the close of business. Submit entries to Ms. Sanders at Seat Pleasant City Hall or to me.

MESSAGE FROM THE CITY ADMINISTRATOR

"SEAT PLEASANT ON THE MOVE"

I have now been on the job as City Administrator for 90 days. Working for the City of Seat Pleasant has proved to be exactly the type of challenge I was looking for, professionally. During my brief time with the City in addition to managing the daily operations of the City, we've experienced an earthquake, hurricane and tropical storm. As residents, you should know that our City staff worked very hard during and in the weeks after the storm to make sure you as residents were able to get back to your normal routines as quickly as possible.



Another great part of working for the City of Seat Pleasant has been meeting our residents. I have been
(CON'T. ON NEXT PAGE)

(CITY ADMINISTRATOR MESSAGE CONT.)

able to meet several of our residents because of your attendance at the Council's Public Session meetings, your attendance at one of the Mayor's Tuesday Night Socials or other public event held over the past few weeks. One thing that cannot be questioned is that our residents take pride in the City of Seat Pleasant. I have met several long-term residents of the City and they all have mentioned that they would like for the City to remain the great community they remember when they grew up here, raised their families or otherwise decided to live here. They would like to protect their great quality of life they have known over the years.

To that end I have noticed that there are several ways that we can all contribute to making sure the City of Seat Pleasant remains a, "City of Excellence". It starts with us all taking ownership of making sure that we work together in enforcing the rules that help us make Seat Pleasant a great place to live. If you notice the following items please be aware as residents and let your neighbors know that the City of Seat Pleasant will begin to consistently enforce the following State of Maryland and City Codes:

- Chapter 75—Curfew – The City has a curfew for anyone under the age of 18 years old. It is 10:00 p.m. to 5:00 a.m., Sunday thru Thursday and 11:00 p.m. to 5:00 a.m., Friday thru Saturday, unless accompanied by a parent or guardian. **Fine up to \$1000 for any parent or guardian.**
- Chapter 129 - Solid Waste - Trash cans - Cannot be placed out earlier than the night before your trash is scheduled to be collected. It must be removed to the rear of the property and out of public view by night fall of the day of collection – **Fine \$400**
- Solid Waste - Bulk Trash –Bulky Trash Collection is provided by appointment only. To request Bulky Trash collection, residents must call Bates Trucking at (301) 773-2069 by Tuesday, no later than 2:00 p.m. to have bulk trash picked-up on Wednesday. Bulk Trash cannot be placed out at any other time. If you need more information please contact the City at 301-336-2600.
- Chapter 154—Storage of Vehicles - Cars and vehicles that are not operable or do not have current tags are not allowed – **Fine up to \$1000**
- Blocking the Fire house on Addison Road – It is a violation in the State of Maryland to block the driveway entrance to any firehouse. Please be aware of it and remind your neighbors. We don't want to cause our Seat Pleasant Volunteer Fire Department to be delayed during an emergency. **Fine up to \$500**
- 2009 International Property Maintenance Code - Property Maintenance – All exteriors of properties and premises must be kept in a clean, safe and sanitary condition –**Fines Vary, Minimum of \$50**
- Chapter 150 - Vehicles and Traffic - Commercial Vehicles – No commercial bus, commercial trailer or heavy commercial truck, can park on any street or highway in the City of Seat Pleasant between the hours of 6:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m. each day of the week or at any time on Sundays or holidays. **Fine - \$150**
- Chapter 112 - Noise – The City of Seat Pleasant has a noise ordinance. It is prohibited for anyone to make, continue or cause to be made any excessive, unnecessary or unusually loud noise that annoys, disturbs or affects others in the limits of the City of Seat Pleasant. **Fine – Up to \$1,000**

Working together we can make sure that the City of Seat Pleasant remains a place that our residents are proud to call home.

THE STATE OF MARYLAND HOMEOWNERS' PROPERTY TAX CREDIT PROGRAM EXTENDED TO OCTOBER 31, 2011

The Homeowners' Tax Credit Program which was explained in detail in the September issue has been extended until October 31st of this year. This program provides credits against State and local real property for homeowners who qualify based on a sliding scale of property tax liability and income. Currently according to Maryland State Department of Taxation and Assessment only 165 residents participate in this program. However, an additional 70 Seat Pleasant residents are eligible for the Homeowners' Property Tax Credit at a net savings of \$610 per resident. The Homeowners' Property Tax Credit Eligibility application can be completed one of three ways listed below:

- By Mailing the application to the address below
- By Using the online Homeowners' Property Tax Credit Application
- By Printing and mailing the pdf application on the State Department of Assessment and Taxation web site <http://www.dat.state.md.us>

The State of Maryland Department of Assessment and Taxation mailing address is:

Department of Assessment and Taxation Homeowners' Tax Credit Program
301 West Preston Street
Baltimore Maryland 21201

The State of Maryland Department of Assessment and Taxation web site is:

<http://www.dat.state.md.us>

The State of Maryland Department of Assessment and Taxation phone number is:

1- 410-767-4433.

If you have any questions please contact Robert L. Ashton City Treasurer 301/336-2600 extension 2230.

A WORD FROM THE SEAT PLEASANT POLICE DEPARTMENT

Recently, there was a rash of cars being vandalized on Seat Pleasant Drive as well as Hylton, G Street, Birchleaf Avenue and Cedarleaf Avenue. While no property was stolen from the vehicles, windows were broken. Here are some ways to curb vandalism:

1. Get to know your neighbors. It is important that you know the people in and around your community. It makes it easier to spot someone who doesn't belong.
2. Form a neighborhood watch program. It is important to engage your neighbors and others in your community. (CPAC is a good organization to contact about starting one. You can e-mail them at cpac.seatpleasant@live.com.)



3. Talk to your neighbors if you see something suspicious. Report suspicious activity to the Police non-emergency number at 301-352-1200
4. Don't store valuables in plain sight in your car. Often vandalism accompanies theft.
5. Install good lighting and consider installing a video camera to monitor your home.

(POLICE DEPARTMENT CONTINUED)

Below are the crime statistics for August. September statistics will not be available until the next issue.

1 CLASSIFICATION OF OFFENSES (PART 1 OFFENSES)	2 OFFENSES REPORTED OR KNOWN TO POLICE (INCLUDE UNFOUNDED AND ATTEMPTS)	3 UNFOUNDED, I.E. FALSE OR BASELESS COMPLAINTS	4 NUMBER OF ACTUAL OFFENSES (COLUMN 2 MINUS COLUMN 3) INCLUDE ATTEMPTS	5 TOTAL OFFENSES CLEARED BY ARREST OR EXCEPTIONAL MEANS (Includes Column 6)	6 NUMBER OF CLEARANCES INVOLVING ONLY PERSONS UNDER 18
1. Criminal Homicide	0	0	0	0	0
a. Murder and nonnegligent manslaughter	11				
b. Manslaughter by negligence	12				
2. Forcible rape Total	0	0	0	0	0
a. Rape by force	20	0	0	0	0
b. Assault to rape attempts	21	0	0	0	0
3. Robbery Total	0	0	0	0	0
a. Firearm	30	0	0	0	0
b. Knife or cutting instrument	31	0	0	0	0
c. Other dangerous weapon	32	0	0	0	0
d. Strong-arm (hands, fists, feet, etc.)	33	0	0	0	0
4. Assault Total	2	0	2	1	0
a. Firearms	40	0	0	0	0
b. Knife or cutting instrument	41	0	0	0	0
c. Other dangerous weapon	42	1	1	0	0
d. Hands, fists, feet, etc. - aggravated	43	0	0	0	0
e. Hands, fists, feet, etc. - simple	44	1	1	1	0
5. Breaking and Entering Total	9	0	9	0	0
a. Forcible entry	50	9	9	0	0
b. Unlawful entry - no force	51	0	0	0	0
c. Attempted forcible entry	52	0	0	0	0
6. Larceny - Theft Total (except Motor Vehicle Theft)	6	1	5	2	0
7. Motor Vehicle Theft Total	4	0	4	0	0
a. Autos	60	4	4	0	0
b. Trucks and Buses	70	0	0	0	0
c. Other Vehicles	71	0	0	0	0
GRAND TOTAL	21	1	20	3	0

A WORD FROM CPAC - BEWARE OF BURGLARIES

Watch out!! The number of burglaries has increased in the last couple of months in our part of the county. According to the statistics, this crime is most often (but not always) committed by people who live right in our community and, surprisingly, most home/residential break-ins happen during the day. Did you know that when your home is broken into, they often put the stolen property in sheds or vacant houses and go back and pick up your things after the heat dies down. What does all of this tell us and what should we do?

1. Since most break-ins occur during the day, watch out for truant kids and anything that is out of the ordinary or unusual.
2. Keep in mind that many burglaries are done by people who live in your neighborhood. It could be a stranger or it may be someone you know.
3. Make a list of your belongings (including make, model, and serial numbers) in case they are stolen and keep this record in a safe place.
4. The greatest weapon in the fight against crime is to be a nosy neighbor. Again, keep your eyes and ears open and your doors locked. Think about starting or joining a Neighborhood Watch Program on your street.
5. If you see something, say something. Call **911** for emergencies or **301-352-1200** for non-emergency calls. Many crimes are solved when you speak up.

Please stay safe. If you have anything you want us to discuss with Seat Pleasant's public safety partners, please email us at cpac.seatpleasant@live.com.

A WORD FROM CODE ENFORCEMENT

The City has been receiving several calls regarding the process for the clean-up of vacant properties. The procedures for vacant property issues are as follows:

- Inspect the property for violations
- Write the property owner a notice of violation
 - Last known owner on record, and or research for bank owned properties
 - If the property is bank owned due to foreclosure or abandonment of owner then the notice will go to the bank.
- Depending on the violation give the owner reasonable time to fix the violations
- If the violations have not be abated within the time framed that was specified in the notice, subsequently:
 - A municipal infraction (ticket) is written to the owner of the property
 - Once the municipal infraction is written, it gives the homeowner 20 days from the time of receipt to either fix the violations or request a court date
 - If any of the violations need immediate attention then the city will fix the violation i.e; cutting the grass, boarding the property. For these actions to take place it must be unsafe
 - If the violation is unsafe then Code Enforcement will issue a work order to the Public Works department for clean-up
 - If the property is safe, then after the 20 days the paper work will be sent to court
 - Once the court date has been sent (which can take up to two months from the time it was sent to court)
 - Then the code officer will ask the judge for abatement and fine of the infraction
 - If the judge grants abatement then the city will proceed with the clean-up and lien the property for the work that was done.

FOR YOUR INFORMATION - TRASH AND OVERGROWN GRASS

§129-12. Residential collections

All refuse, trash and shall be placed in containers of not less than 10 nor more than 20 gallons' capacity. Refuse containers shall be provided by the owner or tenant and maintained in a leak proof and sanitary condition. No trash or garbage shall be placed in paper or cardboard containers. Containers shall be made of metal or of a type approved by the Mayor and Council and shall have tight-fitting lids. No container shall be too heavy to be manageable by one person.

Trash and garbage containers shall be placed at the curb for collection no earlier than darkness of the day before collection and must be removed to the rear of properties and out of public view by darkness on the day of collection.

The Code Enforcement Department will start placing door hangers on resident's doors for minor violations such as high grass, trash containers and bulk trash pickup. The door hangers will serve as a warning to residents. We are hoping that the residents will fix the violation immediately upon receiving this warning to avoid further action and or fines.

A MESSAGE FROM PUBLIC WORKS

The leaves will soon be falling and it will be time for raking. We are asking residents to bag their leaves instead of raking them to the curb. After bagging the leaves place them curbside for collection. Bates Trucking, the City's Trash Contractor will pick up the Yard Waste on Wednesdays. Public Works will also collect them. **Leaves that are not bagged will not be collected.** Tree limbs must also be properly prepared.

(CON'T NEXT PAGE)

(PUBLIC WORKS CONTINUED)

TREE LIMB DISPOSAL

TREE LIMBS MUST NOT EXCEED FOUR FEET IN LENGTH AND THREE INCHES IN DIAMETER AND SECURELY TIED IN BUNDLES. BUNDLES OF GRASS AND LEAVES MUST WEIGH LESS THAN 25 POUNDS. LOOSE TREE LIMBS AND BRANCHES SHOULD NOT BE PLACED CURBSIDE. FAILURE TO DISPOSE OF YARD WASTE PROPERLY IS CONSIDERED A CODE VIOLATION.

A WORD FROM THE SEAT PLEASANT UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND HEALTH PARTNERSHIP (SP-UMHP) AND THE PREVENTION RESEARCH CENTER

Health Tips for the Fall

The fall is a wonderful time of year for us to be outside exercising, and exercise is one of the best things we can do for our health. Exercise helps to increase our strength, endurance, and flexibility (which helps prevent falls); it can help keep blood pressure and blood sugar in good control, and helps us feel better mentally! It is best if we can exercise almost every day, and remember, it does not have to be really demanding—we can walk with family and friends, garden, or follow along with one of the yoga programs on television. If the weather isn't great, we can exercise indoors at the Seat Pleasant Activity Center or the Sports and Learning Complex.

Another health behavior that is important to do in the fall is to get your flu shot. Prince George's county health department offers free flu vaccines and no appointment is necessary (you can just walk-in), although an appointment is recommended. You can also get the vaccine from your doctor's office or at local pharmacies, like CVS. The flu vaccine is especially recommended for older adults (as is the pneumonia vaccine) and for people who live with chronic diseases, like diabetes. Other ways to prevent the spread of the flu (and colds) is to make certain you cover your mouth when you sneeze—sneezing into your shoulder or elbow is best—and wash your hands frequently to prevent the spread of germs; especially wash them after you sneeze or cough or use the bathroom.

The fall, of course, is a new season, which can mean new allergies. There are more outdoor molds in the fall, in gutters, the soil, vegetation, and fallen leaves. If you are sensitive to fall allergies, try not to be outdoors between 5-10 a.m. because pollen spreading peaks at this time of the morning. Also, avoid empty lots or fields where ragweed grows and shower or wash-up well when you come in from outdoors and if not right then, especially before going to bed.

Many root vegetables come into season in the early fall and at this time of year they taste their best and are available at better prices because they are in season. Fall vegetables contain many nutrients and include cauliflower, broccoli, arugula, celery, edamame, chard, eggplant, green beans, horseradish, kale, peppers, chiles, pumpkins and potatoes. Fruits that taste especially good in the fall include apples, grapes, cranberries and quinces. Apples are rich in dietary fiber and antioxidants, which have been shown to decrease our LDL cholesterol levels, the "bad" cholesterol that can increase plaque in our blood vessel walls. Enjoy this beautiful time of the year—the crispness in the air, the cool nights, the delicious, healthy fruits and vegetables and the gorgeous weather!

Sharon M. Desmond, Ph.D. Health Partnership Co-Chairperson

City of Seat Pleasant

"A City of Excellence"

6301 Addison Road

Seat Pleasant, Maryland 20743



PRESORTED
FIRST CLASS
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
SOUTHERN MARYLAND
PERMIT #235

**MOVIE NIGHT IS NOW
FRIDAY, OCTOBER 21ST
7:30 P.M.**



**AT
THE SEAT PLEASANT ACTIVITY
CENTER
5720 ADDISON ROAD
SEAT PLEASANT, MARYLAND 20743
(THIS IS A MAKE UP DATE FOR THE EVENT
THAT WAS CANCELLED
DUE TO RAIN)**

**FOR THOSE INTERESTED, THERE WILL BE
A ZUMBA DEMONSTRATION AT 7:00 P.M.**

**SENIORS AND/OR DISABLED -
APPLICATIONS FOR CHRISTMAS IN APRIL
ARE STILL BEING ACCEPTED. APPLICA-
TIONS MUST BE SUBMITTED BY
NOVEMBER 1ST TO :**

**PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY
CHRISTMAS IN APRIL
7915 MALCOLM ROAD
CLINTON, MARYLAND 20735**



**APPLICATIONS ARE AVAILABLE AT CITY
HALL AND ON THE PRINCE GEORGE'S
COUNTY CHRISTMAS IN APRIL WEBSITE
AT: www.christmasinaprilpg.org**

**FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL
301-336-2600 or 301-868-0937**